REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This preliminary amendment is submitted with a request for continued examination. Claims 1-3, 6-19, 22-34, 36-39, 41-49, and 51 are pending in the application. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1, 2, 9, 22, 25-27, 36-38, 44, and 51 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2005/0080863 to Daniell ("Daniell") in view of U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2005/0114453 to Hardt ("Hardt"). Claims 3, 7, 10-16, 18-19, 29-34, 39, 42, and 45-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2005/0149622 to Kirkland et al. ("Kirkland"). Claims 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Kirkland and further in view of U.S. Pat. App. Pub. No. 2004/0153523 to Albal ("Albal"). Claims 8, 28, 43, and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Kirkland and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,671,355 to Spielman et al. ("Spielman"). Claims 6, 23-24, and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daniell in view of Hardt and further in view of Spielman.

In response to the Office Action, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 10, 22, 29, 36, and 45 to clarify patentable distinctions between the claimed invention and the cited references. Applicants have additionally amended several dependent claims for purposes of consistency in view of amendments made to the independent base claims. Applicants have further cancelled Claims 37 and 51. In light of the amendments and subsequent remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims are patentably distinct from the cited references, taken alone or in combination, and are in condition for allowance.

The Rejection of Independent Claims 1, 22, and 36 under §103(a) is Overcome

The Examiner finds that independent Claims 1, 22, and 36 are obvious in light of the combination of Daniell and Hardt. Independent Claims 1, 22, and 36 are directed to a method, apparatus, and computer program product, respectively. For example, a method according to amended independent Claim 1 includes receiving a generic-recipient message at a network hub. The generic-recipient message comprises a message sent to a

group or community address. The method additionally includes determining predefined attributes of the message. The predefined attributes comprise one or more of a sender of the message, subject of the message, or content of the message. The method also includes determining a type of the message. The method further includes determining one or more recipients for the message based at least in part upon the determined type and further based at least in part upon the predefined attributes by comparing the predefined attributes of the message with stored information related to potential recipients. The method also includes dispatching the message to the one or more determined recipients. Claims 22 and 36 include similar recitations.

Accordingly, Claims 1, 22, and 36 relate to determining one or more recipients for a received generic-recipient message and dispatching the generic-recipient message to the one or more determined recipients. The generic-recipient message may comprise one of several communication types from various communication sources, including, for example, a short message service (SMS) message, a multimedia message service (MMS) message, a electronic mail (email) message, or a voice message. *See, e.g.,* page 5, lines 3-5; page 13, lines 4-14; and FIG. 2 of the application. The type of a received generic-recipient message may be determined and the message may be dispatched based at least in part upon the determined type. *See, e.g.,* page 4, line 26- page 5, line 7, which describes determining predefined attributes of a message including a type and determining a recipient based on the predefined attribute (i.e., type).

In order to clarify this determination of a message type and subsequent determination of one or more recipients based at least in part upon the determined type, Applicants have amended each of independent Claims 1, 22, and 36 to recite determining a type of the message and further to recite determining one or more recipients for the message based at least in part upon the determined type and further based at least in part upon the predefined attributes. In contrast, at most, Daniell and Hardt teach receiving email messages and then determining a recipient email address for the received email message. There is no suggestion in Daniell or Hardt, taken alone or in combination, of receiving a generic-recipient message of any type other than email, as both references address only email messages.

Accordingly, neither Daniell nor Hardt, taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests determining a type of a received generic-recipient message and determining one or more recipients for the message based at least in part upon the determined type. Moreover, none of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination with Daniell and Hardt, cure the deficiencies of Daniell and Hardt. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 22, and 36 are patentably distinct from the cited references such that the rejection of independent Claims 1, 22, and 36 is overcome and the claims are in condition for allowance.

The Rejection of Independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 under §103(a) is Overcome

The Examiner finds that independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 are obvious in light of the combination of Daniell and Kirkland. Independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 are directed to a method, apparatus, and computer program product, respectively. For example, a method according to Claim 10 includes receiving a generic-recipient message. The generic-recipient message comprises a message sent to a group or community address. The method further includes determining predefined attributes of the message, wherein the predefined attributes comprise one or more of a sender of the message, subject of the message, or content of the message. The method also includes determining a type of the message. The method additionally includes determining whether the message has priority based at least in part on the determined type and on the predefined attributes by comparing the predefined attributes of the message with pre-stored priority information. Claims 29 and 45 include similar recitations and are directed to a device and computer program product, respectively. Although not included in Claims 29 and 45, Claim 10 additionally includes prioritizing the message if a determination is made that the message has priority.

Similarly to Claims 1, 22, and 36, Applicants have amended independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 to recite determining a type of the received generic-recipient message. Applicants have further amended independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 to recite that the determination of whether the message has priority is performed based at least in part on the determined type in addition to the predefined attributes. Support for determining

whether a received generic-recipient message has priority based at least in part upon a type of the message may be found, for example, at page 7, lines 29-30 of the present application.

As discussed above, Daniell does not teach or suggest receiving a generic-recipient message having one of a plurality of possible types, as Daniell relates only to the receipt of an email message and thus does not teach or suggest determining a type of a received generic-recipient message as recited by amended independent Claims 10, 20, and 45. Further, Daniell does not teach or suggest determining a priority of a message. The Office Action relies on Kirkland for teaching determining a priority. However, Kirkland does not teach or suggest determining a priority of a generic-recipient message. Moreover, Kirkland relates at most to prioritization only of instant messages. There is no suggestion in Kirkland that multiple types of messages may be received and that whether a received message has priority is determined based at least in part upon a type. Accordingly, Kirkland does not teach or suggest determining whether the message has priority based at least in part on the determined type as recited by amended independent Claims 10, 20, and 45. Moreover, none of the other references, taken alone or in combination with Daniell and Kirkland, cures the deficiencies of Daniell and Kirkland

Accordingly, none of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests amended independent Claims 10, 29, and 45. Therefore, Applicants submit that independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 are patentably distinct from the cited references such that the rejection of independent Claims 10, 29, and 45 is overcome and the claims are in condition for allowance.

The Dependent Claims are Patentably Distinct from the Cited References

Because the dependent claims include each of the recitations of a respective independent claim, Applicants further submit that the dependent claims are patentably distinct from the cited references, taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above and are in condition for allowance.

In addition, with respect to Claims 6, 28, 41, and 43, these claims all variously recite assigning a recipient Radio Frequency identifier(s) to a message. The Office

Action posits that Spielman teaches this recitation. However, Spielman nowhere mentions RF identifiers. The Office Action merely cites FIG. 1 and Col. 9, lines 10-15 of Spielman and states the portions of Spielman teach "The notification delivery message includes a message information part having selected notification information based on the notification device type." However, the notification device type taught by Spielman is merely a type of a device, including, a fax machine, e-mail client, etc. In contrast, an RF identifier as in the claimed invention is associated with an RF tag or RF tag reader associated with a recipient of the message. Thus, for example, the RF identifier associated with a determined recipient of a message may be assigned to a message. Then the recipient having, for example, an RF tag associated with the RF identifier may swipe the tag on a tag reader and receive a message designated for that recipient. *See, e.g.,* page 13, line 30 – page 14, line 13 of the present application. For purposes of clarification, Applicants have amended Claims 6, 28, 41, and 43 to recite that the recipient RF identifier corresponds to a radio frequency tag or a radio frequency tag reader associated with a recipient of the message. Clearly, neither Spielman nor any of the other cited references, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest amended Claims 6, 28, 41, and 43.

Further, with respect to Claim 16, Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest prioritizing the communication medium used to dispatch the message. The Office Action appears to cite Kirkland as teaching this recitation. However, Kirkland at most teaches prioritizing an order in which a received instant message is displayed on a user's screen. Kirkland does not teach or suggest prioritizing the communication medium used to dispatch a generic-recipient message. For example, in the claimed invention, a generic-recipient message sent from a predefined sender or messages including predefined content, such as, voice communication, may be dispatched by a telephone call or voice mail (e.g., in lieu of by email, SMS, or other communication medium). *See, e.g.,* page 17, lines 11-16 of the present application. As Kirkland relates only to prioritizing display of instant messages, Kirkland does not teach or suggest prioritizing the communication medium used to dispatch a generic-recipient message, nor do any of the other cited references, taken alone

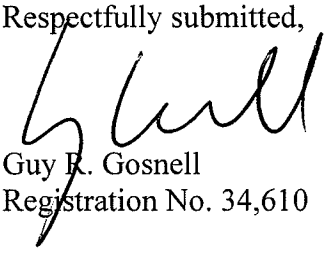
or in combination, teach or suggest this recitation. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 16 is patentably distinct from the cited references, taken alone or in combination. Therefore, the rejection of Claim 16 is overcome and Claim 16 is in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amended claims and remarks presented above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the present claims of the present application are in condition for immediate allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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ELECTRONICALLY FILED USING THE EFS-WEB ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE ON May 22, 2009.